

# The Lemon Grove REVIEW

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Serving Lemon Grove and nearby communities

Thursday, February 22, 1996 25c

## ELECTING A MAYOR

STORIES  
BY DAVE  
SCHWAB

Experience is the key thing Mayor Bob Burns said he looked at when trying to decide who to endorse to replace him in next month's citywide election.

In his mind, one candidate

has it and the other doesn't. He's endorsing Councilman Craig Lake over Councilwoman Mary Sessom — the only two candidates vying to become Lemon Grove's first elected

mayor.

"He knows a little more about running the government than Mary does," said Burns. "Mary's only been on the council for two and half years. She may make a good mayor someday, maybe even now, but I think Craig is the better of the two. He's worked more with solid waste groups, more committees - he's just got more experience."

But Sessom isn't impressed with Lake's long list of committee assignments. She counters that when it comes to strictly dealing with Lemon Grove issues, she's got the advantage of Lake.

"I don't think the benchmark is that you've been on committees so much as it's whether or not you understand the issues facing Lemon Grove," said Sessom.

Lake's list of credentials include serving on the Lemon Grove Incorporation Committee, the Lemon Grove School Board, the city's first General Plan Advisory Committee, the Solid Waste Authority, the San Diego Association of Governments, Heartland Human Relations Committee, the League of Cities and the Parent-Teacher-Students Association.

Sessom has been a member of the Lemon Grove Soroptimist Club, the Lemon Grove Education Foundation, the Parent-Teachers' Association.

Lake said his extensive background in local government at all levels speaks for itself.

"In government, to get things done, you have to network," said Lake. "It takes time to build alliances with other city councils and other jurisdictions - the city of San Diego, the Board of Supervisors, state senators or U.S. representatives."

"If I need something for the city of Lemon Grove, I can call Steve Peace or Duncan Hunter and we can sit down and talk on a one-on-one basis. That's one thing Mary Sessom is definitely lacking in — experience."

While Lake has the backing of Burns, who has served on the City Council since the city's incorporation 19 years ago, another long-time city activist, Jack Moore, is backing Sessom.

"Mary Sessom is more communicative and approachable with the citizenry," said Moore, a member of the Chamber of Commerce board and an unsuccessful

candidate for council two years ago. "I think she'll be fair with business. From time to time, Craig Lake has not been fair to business."

Lake's big problem with busi-

ness, Moore said, is his stalwart personal convictions.

"His Christian leanings get in the way of good business judgment," Moore said.

*Continued on page 3*



### MARY SESSOM

especially older teenagers.

"We're not doing enough for outside of athletic programs," she said. "I'd like to see places where these kids can hang out socially. I'm not a proponent of a teen center necessarily. That is just one option."

Sessom says the city needs to explore more ways to increase the citizens' sense of safety in the city. She said she doesn't necessarily buy the theory that more police on the streets is the best way to produce that.

"We need to support and revitalize our Neighborhood Watch Program," she said. "We need to increase support for our volunteer (sheriff) program."

Sessom said she also supports a balanced and even-handed approach to land-use in the city. Maintaining property values is very important, and will require a balancing act between preserving the property rights of owners, and looking at what's best for each individual neighborhood.

She cited Central Avenue as a case in point, where developers want to build more multi-family units in a neighborhood that's largely single-family.

"We need to seek a balance between the rights of the people who own the property to develop it as they want," she said, "and the rights of the neighborhood to preserve that neighborhood's identity."

Sessom has also spearheaded the drafting of a city ordinance banning panhandling, and is currently working on a new ordinance that would bar juvenile loitering.

Lemon Grove City Councilwoman Mary Sessom says she's running for mayor out of a sense of community commitment.

"I was going to be staying in the city for many, many years," she said, "and I liked what was going on with the city, so I decided the best way to continue with the positive things was to become involved."

A family law attorney for 16 years, Sessom also teaches in Cuyamaca College's paralegal program. She has lived in Lemon Grove for 11 years, where she has raised two children, ages 9 and 12.

Education, she said, is one of her primary focuses.

"I've been extremely active in PTA for six years," she noted. "I'm currently vice president of the Lemon Grove Education Foundation, a group of parents, teachers and community members started recently to raise funds for the Lemon Grove School District."

Sessom is youth-oriented, always involved with youth and youth programs. She said she would like to explore putting together a "youth master plan," because not enough is being done for certain age groups.

### SESSOM'S SUPPORT

James Dorman (La Mesa), attorney, Dorman & Dorman, \$150  
Dave Robinson (San Diego), attorney, state of Calif., \$150  
Jack Shelver (Lemon Grove), retired city manager, \$100  
Willie Baker (Spring Valley), Folex, \$250  
Ross Zimmerman (Carlsbad), auditor, Levitz, \$250  
Lisa Zimmerman (Carlsbad), attorney, \$250  
Miscellaneous contributions, \$283.99  
**Total contributions through 2/10/96 = \$1,433.99**

### CRAIG LAKE

City Councilman Craig Lake views himself as the political insider in the race. He first got involved in Lemon Grove politics in 1975 with the original push to incorporate. He was appointed to the first general plan advisory committee in 1977 that developed a 20-year community plan.

"I've pretty much been involved in Lemon Grove politics all my life," said Lake, who was first elected to Lemon Grove City Council in 1990, and re-elected in 1994 with the highest vote count. "When Dr. Burns leaves the council, there will be no member with more than 24 months experience on the council."

Lake said he's served on the council under all three previous mayors and has been on the council longer than the present city clerk and city manager.

Married with five children, Lake owns and operates Craig Lake's Volitions, a venture capitalist, multi-national, investment consulting company.

A former Lemon Grove School Board member, Lake is involved on a broad range of civic fronts. He's president of Lemon Grove Kiwanis and a member of the Chamber of Commerce, Old Time Days, Honorary Little League, the Senior Center Council, the Christian Church and ADAPT drug education program.

Lake's a fiscal conservative, an approach he would adopt with the city if elected mayor.

"I would like to continue to do more with less, to run the city more like a business," he said.



"We need to re-invent and re-engineer government. We need to hold the lid on taxes and fees, while at the same time, find effective ways to manage the city."

Lake's priorities as mayor would be to improve lines of communication between the populace and city government and increase parks. He said he would like to see a "special treatment area" between Central and San Miguel avenues developed into an athletic park. He would also like to sponsor a youth-in-government day in which students would shadow elected officials, department heads and city leaders.

Lake's also concerned about enhancing the city's image and is proud of having played a role in the city's commercial renaissance.

"Our first step was to increase the financial base for the city," he said, referring to bringing Home Depot and Food 4 Less into town. "Lemon Grove is one of the few cities in San Diego where we had more money in our budget than we expected. Increasing our sales tax has also had a rippling effect throughout the community."

### LAKE'S SUPPORT

Craig Lake, himself, \$250  
Marcia Hughes (Coronado), retired attorney, \$250  
Dean Freeman (Lemon Grove), trucker, Solidarity, \$100  
Tom Baker (San Diego), church elder, \$100  
Lud Camp (Lemon Grove), sales, Corral Ford, \$250  
Miscellaneous contributions: \$710  
**Total contributions through 2/10/96 = \$1,660**



# In the Service

Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class **Juan E. Delamora**, son of Luis G. and Jovita J. Delamora of Lemon Grove has returned to San Diego after completing a six-month overseas deployment aboard the amphibious assault ship USS New Orleans, which included duty in the Persian Gulf near Iraq.

Delamora is one of more than 1,600 sailors and Marines aboard the large-deck amphibious ship who completed the 35,000-mile voyage. Delamora's ship was the lead ship of the four-ship USS New Orleans Amphibious Ready Group (ARG), which also included the amphibious transport dock USS Juneau, the dock landing ships USS Comstock and USS Mount Vernon and the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit.

## Lemon Grove Fire Log

January 9, 1996 through Jan. 15, 1996

1600 blk. Elroy Dr. Vomiting.  
 7500 blk. Broadway. Child locked in auto.  
 2600 blk. Nida Pl. Fall.  
 7100 blk. Broadway. Alarms ringing-commercial.  
 3500 blk. Grove St. Possible stroke.  
 2300 blk. Cypress Ave. Difficulty breathing.  
 2400 blk. Skyline Dr. Gunshot/shooting victim.  
 2200 blk. Massachusetts Ave. Non breather.  
 1500 blk. Corta Del Sur. Dizzy.  
 7600 blk. Broadway. Evaluate for the Sheriff.  
 7400 blk. Broadway. Evaluate for the Sheriff.  
 3200 blk. College Pl. Difficulty breathing.  
 1300 blk. Skyline Dr. Choking victim.  
 7400 blk. Pacific Ave. Head injury.  
 Spring St./Hwy 94 EB. Traffic accident.  
 7800 blk. Palm St. Medical aid.  
 7500 blk. North Ave. Auto vs. pedestrian.  
 Citrus St./Broadway. Traffic accident.  
 Broadway/Kempf St. Person down.  
 Hwy 94/Lemon Grove Ave. Vehicle accident freeway.  
 7600 blk. Broadway. Abdominal pains.  
 7900 blk. Palm St. Seizure.  
 1700 blk. San Altos Pl. Broken leg.  
 7500 blk. North Ave. Seizure.  
 7600 blk. Broadway. Person down.  
 7800 blk. Bryan Ct. Chest pains.  
 8300 blk. Broadway. Difficulty breathing.  
 3200 blk. Main St. Evaluate for the Sheriff.  
 2200 blk. Washington Ave. Possible Heart.  
 2000 blk. Fairhaven St. Medical aid.  
 3400 blk. Main St. Unconscious.  
 3400 blk. Main St. Back pain.  
 8100 blk. Broadway. Chest pains.  
 6900 blk. Central Ave. Commercial/industrial fire.  
 2000 blk. Fairhaven St. Chest pains.  
 2200 blk. Massachusetts Ave. Medic alert alarm.  
 6900 blk. Central Ave. Abdominal pains.  
 7100 blk. Rosemary Ln. Assist invalid.  
 2800 blk. Lemon Grove Ave. Unconscious.  
 8200 blk. Broadway. Dizzy.

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 Jay La Suer comments on politics and government  
<http://www.sandiego-online.com/eco/lasuer.html>

## The Lemon Grove Review

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Contributing writers: Lora Clark, Phillip Giannangeli, Cynthia O'Neill, Marilyn Phenow, Dave Schwab, Paul Treske, Betty Jo Tucker

### Submissions

Editorial and photo submissions are welcome, but will not be returned to sender unless accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelope. The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions.

### Advertising

All advertising is subject to current rate card. The publisher reserves the right to reject an advertiser's order.

Only publication of an advertisement shall constitute final acceptance.

Send all correspondence to: Forum Publications, Inc., P.O. Box 127, Lemon Grove, CA 91946

## WEATHER

The following information was provided by the Lemon Grove Fire Department.

	High	Low
Feb. 12	67	53
Feb. 13	72	56
Feb. 14	69	50
Feb. 15	70	52
Feb. 16	76	51
Feb. 17	65	54
Feb. 18	69	53

## Lemon Grove Almanac

1994 Population: 25,100  
 Incorporated: 1977  
 Area: 3.75 sq. mi.  
 Median income: \$34,399

Mayor: **Bob Burns**  
 Council: **Thomas Clabby**  
**Craig Lake**  
**Dwight Shelley**  
**Mary Teresa Sessom**

City Manager: **Doug Yount**  
 Planning Director: **Jim Butler**  
 Attorney: **Gloria McLean**  
 City Clerk: **Christine Taub**  
 Sheriff's Capt.: **Yolanda Collins**  
 Fire Chief: **William Wright**

Congressional district:  
**52nd - Duncan Hunter**  
 State Senate district:  
**40th - Steve Peace**  
 State Assembly district:  
**77th - Steve Baldwin**  
 Supervisorial district:  
**2nd - Dianne Jacob**

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## B Words

*Personal comments from Mayor Bob Burns*

### Signs

Some call it blight, and some consider it just a nuisance that is indigenous to the political scene.

In my small time political career, I called it cheap and necessary. I refer to the yard signs that have sprouted up around our town. I would hope that number 1, the candidates would all play by the rules, and number 2 that as many as possible would allow them to be placed where there is no aversion to same.

First the rules are, that they be erected no sooner than 45 days prior to the election, and that they be removed within 5 days afterward. Some time ago, a candidate claimed that such rules were a violation of the free speech amendment to the constitution.

Maybe so, but it seems to me that they all should have the courtesy to play the game equally. So, I guess what I am saying is that fair is fair if all comply, and the public gets their true wishes granted.

In a small town, such as Lemon Grove, it should not be mandatory that zillions of dollars be spent in a campaign for a seat in local government.

The yard signs, I found, were the most economical, and most effective way to get a name in front of the voters. The signs are cheap, and with supporters and family to help erect them, the results are the best bargain in political races.

Also, they can be gathered up swiftly, and the city can be clean within a week after the polls close. It has always been so with our local races, but sadly the out of town sign putter uppers do great in erection but poorly in abatement.

If one of our Lemon Grove candidates contacts you with a request to place a sign in your strategic front yard, or on a highly visible fence, please give it every consideration.

Look upon it as an example of trying to achieve election in a fair manner, and not trying to "buy" it. In today's political scene, money seems to be the force used to win, and that is sad. It probably does not enter much into our little town politics because the monthly salary for a council-person is only \$360 and it would not go far if it were all spent to win a post.

The yard signs that I have seen are colorful and neat, and not unsightly. They demonstrate the support of the property owner, and can influence the neighborhood according to the popularity and respect of the individual displaying it.

It can work both ways.

We have two able candidates for mayor, and four who would like to occupy the single council seat on the ballot.

There will be a candidates Forum where all will publicly give their views and be subject to questioning.

Our local newspaper will cover each candidate as it historically has done in such fine fashion and I would encourage everyone to study them and the issues that involve our city.

The single other issue on our ballot is the advisory vote on how the Regional Communication System should be paid for. The present Council is wrestling with that very question, and believes that it is of a nature that a vote of the people involved should make the decision.

Again, please do not regard the yard signs as blight, but simply as a low cost method of campaigning.

If big money were to be somehow prohibited in political campaigns, I believe that fairer decisions would be made, and better results achieved.

## Worship Directory

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# City council candidates share community commitment

by Dave Schwab

*Note: There are four candidates, running for one seat on the Lemon Grove City Council. Incumbent Dwight Shelley was profiled in the Feb. 1 issue. Only one candidate could be reached for a photo.*

Lemon Grove City Council challengers Richard Louis, David Wells and "Ranger" Dick Whitmore all feel they have something to offer local government — open mindedness, a fresh perspective and unbridled community dedication.

Louis, 43, has a doctorate in counseling. He's a job developer with San Diego City Schools, working with employers to find job opportunities for youth.

Louis is running out of personal conviction that it's a citizen's duty to take an active role in government.

"This is my first attempt to volunteer to participate in the community, really get involved in my community," he said. "I'm not really going into this in the sense of competing for this position."

"This is my chance to make my point, have my voice heard through my participation in the (government) process. Community involvement is what I'm all about. I believe you need to become a participant in what Lemon Grove becomes — or not be here."

Louis believes there are a lot of unmet needs for Lemon Grove youth which should be addressed.

He also has another major priority: maintaining Lemon Grove's distinctive small-town character, as opposed to being absorbed by San Diego, with its higher crime rate and lower standard of living.

## MAYOR

For example Moore said, Lake's personal beliefs played a role in his decision to oppose a liquor store at the corner of Palm Avenue and Sweetwater Road.

"Craig does get too restrictive in his judgments sometimes on the City Council," Moore said.

But Lake hasn't been a total zero on the council, according to Moore.

"I give Craig credit for voting against a mid-year budget adjustment that would have given promotions and pay raises and added personnel to city government," he



Richard Louis

"The issue is maintaining the small-town lifestyle," he said. "That's why I live here."

Lemon Grove needs to promote its ethnic and cultural diversity more, said Louis.

"Lemon Grove's diversity pretty much makes it a microcosm of California," he said. "My kids are growing up with others of every race and creed. It's not forced. It's just natural. I think diversity is a strength. I think we should become a model of a successful, diverse city."

Council candidate David Wells, 68, is a retired industrial manager who worked for the Convair Division of General Dynamics for 36 years.

Wells worked as a supervisor of facilities in planning and management. He was responsible for planning for all new facilities including buildings and equipment.

He also worked with expense budgets and real estate acquisitions.

Wells says he has one decided advantage over his three council challengers.

"I'm retired, so I have the time and the energy (to devote)," Wells said. "I'm the only candidate running who's not working."

A longtime member of Lemon Grove's Sheriff's Senior Volunteer Patrol, Wells said he "just likes to help out."

Wells said part of his impetus for running for city council came from witnessing the present council in action.

"I just had the interest to go to council meetings and see what was going on and I said, hell, I can do this as good as they can," he concluded.

Wells said Lemon Grove needs to do more to promote business.

"I'd like to get more business out here to get more of a tax base, get more small businesses to come in," he said. "We're basically a bedroom community with no major industrial. I'd like to see us get some light industry in here if we possibly could."

If elected, Wells said one of his priorities would be to do something with drainage problems on the city's west end.

"With heavy rains, flooding gets pretty deep, and it's a major problem," he said. "If we don't do something, sooner or later, we're going to have a tragedy down there."

Wells also favors the city ballot measure asking citizens to sanction going to an 800 megahertz regional communications system.

"It would give the sheriff's a lot better coverage," he said. "We have some dead (communication) spots in Lemon Grove."

Council challenger "Ranger" Dick Whitmore has been an employee of the city of San Diego's Parks and Recreation Department for 33 years.

He got his ranger title from working in Balboa Park and Chollas Lake, a youth fishing reservoir.

Whitmore's been active in

local community affairs, especially youth activities. He was Grossmont area commissioner for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Lemon Grove for several years.

"I've been very active in civic activities," Whitmore added. "I've had groups entered in the Old Time Days parade."

Last summer, Whitmore said he had a great experience working with the San Diego Police Department's, Drug and Alcohol Resistance Education (DARE) program, that promotes drug-free lifestyles among youth.

Whitmore claims openmindedness and fairness to be two of his real strengths.

"I don't take any stands until I've heard both sides of an issue," he concluded.

Community outreach would be one of Whitmore's missions as a councilman.

"The public needs to be more informed about what's happening in city hall and at city hall meetings," he said. "I would like to see more notification of events and citizen involvement."

Whitmore said he's conducting a hands-on campaign.

"My strategy is to go door-to-door," he said, "passing out information and requesting people to vote for me."

Whitmore's doing one more thing during his household campaign drive.

"Those households that don't have registered voters at that address — I leave them voter registration cards," he said.

## Local candidates in the spotlight

"Local Leaders," a television show produced by Cox Cable, will feature interviews with Lemon Grove City Council candidates Craig Lake, Richard Louis, Mary Sessom, Dwight Shelley and David Wells.

Steven Saint, publisher of the *Lemon Grove Review* and Chet Barfield of the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, will ask candidates to discuss relevant to the Lemon Grove community during each of the two half-hour shows.

The first show will air on KCOX, Channel 4, Tuesday at 7 p.m., with guests Richard Louis, Dwight Shelley and David Wells.

The second show airs Wednesday at 7 p.m., with guests Craig Lake and Mary Sessom.



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Continued from page 1

said. "Lake and (Councilman Dwight) Shelley voted against it."

While Burns is supporting Lake, he's by no means concluding that Sessom will be bad for the city. As he retires from elective politics, he figures he's leaving city government at an optimum time.

"I'm getting too old and it's time for me to hang it up," Burns said. "We have too good candidates and I'm very confident I'm leaving the city in good hands."

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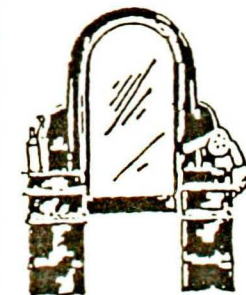
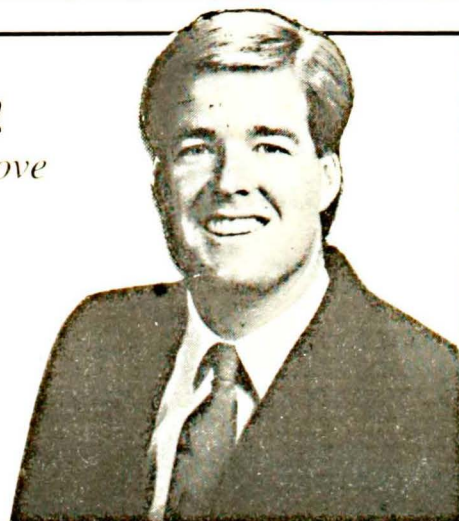
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See Page 7**



## Commentary

*Farewell to team*

by Paul Treske

Despite my age, or perhaps because of it, I am an ardent sports fan. And as a result, the feature story in Sunday's *Union-Tribune* sports section on school-hopping high school athletes came as no surprise.

The story described the penchant of numerous local high school student-athletes for transferring from school to school to follow the best opportunities to showcase their talents for college scouts. This is made easier by the casual district transfer rules which put little impediment in the way of such moves.

The feature focus of the story was star East County athlete Mike Van Raaphorst who, after playing football, basketball and volleyball for three years at Grossmont High, transferred briefly to Helix last fall, quarterbacked their excellent team, and then quickly returned to Grossmont in time to play on their basketball team (which is, incidentally, better than Helix's). It worked for almost everyone. Helix reached the CIF semifinals with Mike at the helm, the school-hopping quarterback received a prized scholarship to USC and the Foothillers basketball team got back a terrific boardsman. Only his Grossmont football teammates and fellow students were the losers, but then again, I guess someone has to lose in this sort of thing.

Van Raaphorst is, of course, hardly the only one. The *U-T* article listed some 34 other male and female county basketball players who changed schools

in order to play on a better team or for a better or more palatable coach. This would seem to mirror major league professional sports in which players become mercenaries, moving from team to team according to who pays the most.

Despite my age and apparent stodginess, I do understand that times have changed and concepts of team loyalty have changed along with them. But as an individual who prizes loyalty above any other value, I cannot help but mourn for the days when loyalty to one's teammates and classmates seemed to mean something.

Those were days when the worst crime an athlete could commit was to let his teammates down by not playing his hardest. Today, apparently, one can casually walk away from teammates in order to better oneself in one way or another and nobody, least of all the individual's parents, seem to think this is wrong.

According to Van Raaphorst, as quoted in the *U-T* article, "The whole objective of the serious athlete is to go to the next level and if you are fortunate, get a scholarship." Well, he certainly did all of that, and more, but I cannot help but sympathize with his former Grossmont High School teammates whose 1995 season was made even more miserable by their former quarterback reaching a new level elsewhere. One also wonders whatever happened to the word "team."

## Reel thoughts

### DeGeneres is right in 'Mr. Wrong'

by Betty Jo Tucker

If you feel over-saturated with gooey Valentine's Day love stories lately, then "Mr. Wrong" is the movie for you. Touchstone's new comedy, starring Ellen DeGeneres and Bill Pullman, turns the single woman's worst nightmare into an hilarious "anti-romance" adventure.

DeGeneres (television's "Ellen") brings her unique comic presence to the big screen in the funniest movie released so far this year, and Pullman ("While You Were Sleeping," "Caspar"), gives the best off-beat performance of his career in this outrageously entertaining film.

DeGeneres plays a San Diego television talent coordinator who thinks she has found the perfect mate when she attracts a handsome, attentive, rich suitor. Pullman, as the new boyfriend, soon changes from Prince Charming to Prince Alarming. No matter what our heroine tries, she cannot get out of this relationship.

Filled with great sight gags (a clown on stilts falling to the ground, piles of ridiculous gifts delivered to DeGeneres' house, etc.), "Mr. Wrong" also features an almost over-the-top performance by Joan Cusack ("Toys," "Working Girl") as a jilted girlfriend out for revenge. As a torturer, she shows no mercy. She even puts gum in her victim's hair!

DeGeneres appears more appealing on the big screen than on television because we get a better look at her quirky facial expressions. But can she make a successful transition to movies? After all, not many female comedians have done so. Lily Tomlin and Carol Burnett looked promising, but when they tried drama, their movie careers fizzled.

Goldie Hawn of "Laugh In" fame holds the



Ellen DeGeneres discovers Bill Pullman is "Mr. Wrong" in a film shot on location in San Diego.

Photo by E.J. Camp, courtesy Touchstone Pictures

record for most film successes in this category as a result of her appearance in a series of popular films including "Private Benjamin," "Foul Play," and "The Duchess and the Dirtwater Fox."

Hopefully, DeGeneres will follow in Hawn's footsteps. In "Mr. Wrong," she certainly shows great promise. Her low-key, but very humorous, reactions (especially when her boyfriend reads his dreadful poetry and tries to be Mr. Perfect while meeting her family) endear her to the audience. Throughout the film, we care what happens to her character. In fact, we even wish we could help her out of the mess she's in.

While emphasizing the comical aspects of a bad relationship, "Mr. Wrong" serves as a serious warning for today's single women and men to "look before they leap."

## Letters to the Editor

### Clueless

As often as I disagree with Paul Treske, he is largely civil in his remarks. Robert Winslow ["In Defense of Hillary Clinton," Feb. 13] not only showed Mr. Treske's penchant for looking at things from the wrong end of a telescope, but also engaged in vulgar name calling.

I read his letter open mouth, wondering how anyone could be so wrong. The only thing I found accurate were his comments about the unemployment rate and the stock market. Since he is ignorant of so much else, I would never want him as my advocate.

Like so many on the political left, he argues with emotion and not with logic or facts.

The "Go After Hillary" seems to me to find out why there are so many discrepancies between her testimony and the testimony of others. She would not be the focus except for the discrepancies. Would not any competent attorney attempt to find the truth? If the previous congress had done a proper investigation, the present congress would not have had to. As to the women-hating, semi-educated, angry white males' comment, shame, shame, shame. He doesn't have a clue. It is very easy to refute the other things mentioned in his letter but to what point?

RICHARD WEST  
Spring Valley

### Time for a change

As school districts in the East County study reorganization and unification, we should reflect on what educational units should be like in the 21st Century. The current educational structure requires the high school district to coordinate and communicate with eight feeder districts — Alpine, Cajon Valley, Dehesa, Jamul-Dulzura, Lakeside, La Mesa-Spring Valley, Lemon Grove and Santee. The district must also work with the incorporated cities of El Cajon, La Mesa, Lemon Grove and Santee, the county of San Diego, the state of California and the federal government.

This current structure makes communication, decision-making and accountability extremely difficult. Because the high school district is so large, needs in one part of the district may be significantly different from needs in another.

Ideally, how should East County education be structured? Districts should be based on a realistic view of what constitutes an educational community. An optimal educational community should consist of families, teachers, politicians, businessmen, administrators and board members who share a common sense of community. That community and its governing board should not be fragmented between younger and older students nor should it be fragmented between competing governmental units. The ideal district should have enough students so that it can achieve economies of scale but be small enough to achieve good communication and responsiveness.

We owe the students of the future an educational structure in the East County which can provide them with more opportunities. We owe them an educational structure that can deal effectively with overcrowding, facilities maintenance, diversity of ideas and cultures and apathy in a proactive and inclusive manner.

I urge parents to get involved and informed about East County education. They need to insist that the nine school boards work together to develop a model educational structure for the 21st Century.

KAREN PERRY  
El Cajon

### Tail wagging the lion

Who are those environmental simpletons who conned the people of California into surrendering many of their wilderness parks and hiking trails to mountain lions that stalk and kill humans? Will any of them volunteer to hike alone and unarmed in Cuyamaca Rancho State Park? One lion encounter should be enough to convince them of their folly. I'm a long-time California trail hiker, but I'll plan on doing my future hiking in other states.

Someone apparently decided that so-called "animal rights" take precedence over human rights and safety. I don't believe that was the Creator's intent. This is an example of the "tail wagging the dog" - or perhaps I should say "the tail wagging the lion."

RALPH E. WINKLER  
Lakeside

### United Seniors not united

Regarding the irresponsible endorsement of Proposition 199 on the California ballot by Sandra L. Butler, president of the United Seniors Association: Mrs. Butler makes a living soliciting funds for senior causes. Probably a large number of her donors are senior California citizens who live in mobile home parks.

After a telephone conversation with a Laurie Knights in their Fairfax office on Feb. 15, I am convinced that no one in their organization knows anything about the problems of Californians who live in mobile home parks, especially seniors.

Mrs. Butler should retract her endorsement. Members of United Senior, Inc. should cancel their membership and refuse to provide any more financial support.

ORVILLE B. ROBINSON  
member, United Seniors Association, Inc.  
Santee

Coming next week:

## A Voters Guide of the Perplexed

(Everything you ever wanted to know about the ballot propositions but couldn't figure out from the ballot book)



## Arts! Arts! Arts!

## Lemon Grove Arts Complex abuzz

Renowned San Diego photographer Adriene Hughes opened an exhibit of her work at the Lemon Grove Arts Complex with a capacity crowd Saturday night.

The exhibit will be on display throughout February and March at the complex, 9075 Broadway.

The Lemon Grove Arts Complex is a non-profit arts education center dedicated to offering professional quality instructions at affordable prices.

Students from all over East County have been accepted into nationwide programs and successfully transitioned into art related careers.

The Complex is now enrolling students for its Spring session, offering classes in dance, visual arts and drama.

Classes include:

- Ballet - ages 4 through adult, including a pre-professional curriculum for career oriented students.

- Jazz - beginning levels with Aaron Oomeroy; intermediate and advanced levels with Broad-



Adriene Hughes stands by her work at the Lemon Grove Arts Complex.

Photo by Kim Blackford

way dancer Tony Caligagan:

- Modern - ages 12 and up with Marta Jiacoletti;

- Tap - beginning levels with Aaron Pomeroy

There is a special class for disabled children (cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome, blind and deaf) from 5 to 6:15 p.m. on Thursdays with Marta Jiacoletti.

The art classes include cartooning, drawing, painting, ceramics and crafts for ages 7 and up from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on Tuesdays.

The Drama Department offers classes for ages 7 and up and in-

cludes acting audition skills and stage craft.

A special introductory offer of unlimited classes for \$25 for the first month is designed to allow parents and children to explore various fields of interest.

For schedule and information, call 469-7020 or 287-4847.

## East County Theater Guide

## Lamplighters Community Theater

8053 University Avenue, La Mesa (464-4598)

"Quilters" by Molly Newman & Barbara Damashek

Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m.

Sunday, 2 p.m.

Tickets: \$10 - \$12

## Grossmont College Theatre Arts

Stagehouse Theatre, Grossmont College

8800 Grossmont College Dr., El Cajon (465-1700, ext. 234)

"Getting Out" by Marsha Norman

Wednesday through March 2, 8 p.m.

March 3, 2 p.m.

Tickets: \$7 - 10

## San Diego State University Drama Dept.

Experimental Theatre, SDSU

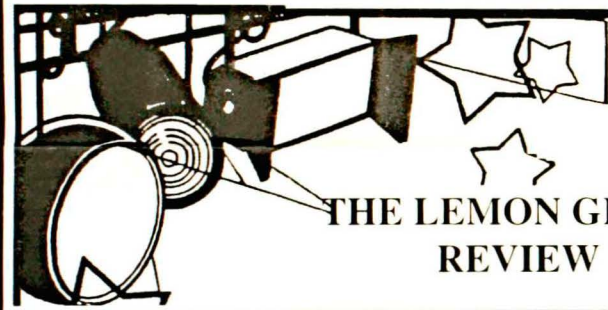
Campanile Drive, San Diego (594-6902)

"Memories of Chester & Billy" a musical based on Theodore Dreiser's "An American Tragedy"

Friday & Saturday, 7:30 p.m.

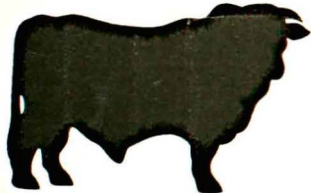
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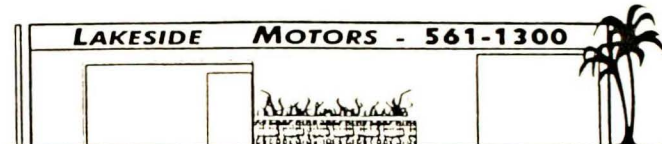
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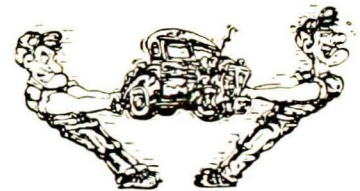
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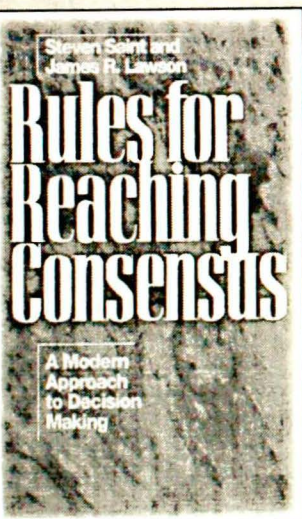
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# Discounters

Continued from page 6

realize that nowadays I can buy directly from the manufacturer. We don't have to go through a middleman anymore."

When Walmart came into Santee, doomsayers predicted the downfall of every small retailer in the region. The sky has not fallen, according to Alan Tuthill, immediate past president of the Santee Chamber of Commerce.

"My impression is that it is not nearly as devastating as people thought it would be," Tuthill said. "There were a number of people on the way out of business because of the recession, and El Hajj Hardware went out of business. Home Depot probably had an effect on them. But I don't think Walmart has driven out the hordes of businesses that people expected. I don't hear the comments around, 'Oh my God, they're just ruining me.'"

In fact, a trip through Town Center reveals that a number of smaller businesses have opened doors in the strip malls near the mega-stores.

It's really the job of local chambers of commerce to help

small businesses compete in the new market, according to Terry Saverson, executive director of the El Cajon chamber.

"The reality is, it's very hard to stop a Walmart from coming into a community," Saverson said. "They contribute so many tax dollars that it's hard on the city to turn them away. The best thing the chamber can do for small businesses is hold workshops, much like we did with Kent Burnes, and show them how they can be successful."

If customer service is the name of the game, Louis E. Hopkins, owner of La Mesa Camera & Video, figures there's a reason his shop has been open since 1948.

"We have no commissioned sales people," said Hopkins. "All of our people are on salary, so they're selling the customers what they need not just a product they can get the highest commission on. We've had a lot of customers congratulate us over the years that we've sold them what they wanted and they didn't have something shoved down their throats."

Hopkins also ensures all of his

employees are well trained to answer customers questions and demonstrate how a product works. He doesn't bother trying to compete with big retailers on price.

"We've had customers come in from other stores in town and they've bought a camera that is defective," Hopkins said. "The large retailers turn a deaf ear. 'Return it to the manufacturer,' they say. If you buy a camera from us and it's defective, we'll exchange it right when it comes in and we'll return it to the manufacturer."

As an example of customer service, Hopkins recalled the time a woman saved all winter to take a trip to Hawaii. A week before she was to leave, she discovered her new camera was broken. The store where she bought wouldn't exchange and it would have taken weeks to get it back from the manufacturer for repairs.

"She broke into tears right in the store," Hopkins said. "We had no authority to exchange the camera, but we agreed to fix it and we loaned her a camera to take on her

trip."

Another Kent Burnes recommendation is for a business to find something unique about itself and exploit it, build it into an image, make it the stores strength.

In El Cajon, Mark Dudenhoefter of Dudenhoefter Fine Jewelry, said what's unique about his business is its long history. There has been a Dudenhoefter selling and making jewelry either in California or Cincinnati since 1887. Dudenhoefter's father moved to California in 1955 and carried on the tradition. He bought the El Cajon store in 1977 from another well established jeweler, Gill Willis, who opened his store in 1946.

"There is a lot of history associated with this business, which is really important when a customer is making a blind purchase where they really need to rely on the seller's reputation," said Dudenhoefter.

Even though the store is in a somewhat economically depressed neighborhood, away from a heavy-traffic area like a

mall, the store has never wanted for business, Dudenhoefter said. He's never felt compelled to start marking down prices just to compete.

"We sell quality gem stones," said Dudenhoefter. "We've not fallen into selling low quality gems and playing the discount game where you mark something up only to mark it down later. In my mind the discount game always means low quality."

But Dudenhoefter, who's business is on Main Street near Magnolia Avenue, would never recommend that a new business try to enter a downtown area that isn't fully revitalized and try to make a go of it. They wouldn't have the history or reputation to attract customers, he said.

But a business in an attractive downtown, such as La Mesa Camera, has a built in advantage, according to Gordon Austin, executive vice president of the La Mesa Chamber of Commerce.

The village atmosphere of downtown La Mesa creates a pleasant shopping experience, and ambiance is always an advantage for small businesses, according to Burnes, who said large stores make little effort to create attractive, unique stores.

There is no doubt Downtown La Mesa has remained successful even while competition and the recession of hurt outlying areas, Austin said.

"You see vacancies all around, but in downtown there are virtually no vacancies," Austin said. "When you do have a vacancy, they fill it up almost immediately. You don't have to go but a mile away and you find stores that have been vacant for a year or more."

In order for small businesses to survive, however, it's important for them to remember that all small businesses belong to the same industry — the small business industry — and they must support each other, Burnes said.

Austin agreed and pointed out that small businesses must network with each other, which is another way that chambers help small businesses.

"When we get businesses doing business with each other, there's a lot of synergy," Austin said. "That's why we developed the BizNets (a monthly gathering for business owners and managers to network). They help develop ongoing business relationships."

Burnes made the point at least three times during his seminar, each time with an increasing evangelist-like fervor: "We are an industry that is directly dependent on each other," Burnes said. "If you win, we all win."

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